

## **Lesson Plan: Picture This-The Demographics of Fairfax County**

This activity focuses on major demographic characteristics of Fairfax County. The primary purpose is to connect students to a statistical profile of the County including population, income, age, employment, and housing. The information needed is available in print and on-line. This could be completed as a take-home assignment or completed in a computer lab.

### **Connection to POS: Standards 8.5 and 8.6**

- ◆ *Students will be able to acquire information from a variety sources (8.5.1)*
- ◆ *Students will be able to analyze information (8.5.2)*
- ◆ *Students will be able to make and evaluate decisions (8.6.1)*
- ◆ *Students will be able to apply knowledge and understanding of civics, economics, and geography to other areas of knowledge. (8.6.1)*

### **SOL Standard: 7.10**



### **Objectives**

At the end of this lesson students will be able to:

- ◆ identify salient demographic characteristics of Fairfax County and explain recent trends in county population.
- ◆ analyze and reflect upon the impact of demographic changes on policy-making and the quality of life enjoyed by residents of the county.



### **Materials**

- ◆ Brochure: *Fairfax County 1998 Characteristics*; available on-line at

<http://www.co.fairfax.va.us/comm/demogrph/homepage.htm>.

- ◆ Booklet: *FAIRFAX COUNTY, VIRGINIA PROFILE* (8/99) A 12-page economic/demographic profile of the County published by the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority. Classroom sets may be provided to teachers upon request by calling (703)790-0600. The information can also be accessed online at:

<http://www.FairfaxCountyEDA.org/demographics-f.htm>



### **Time Needed**

- ◆ Varies with the nature of the assignment.
- ◆ Completion of the search questions requires browse time with the demographic data. Students should use the various buttons on the demographics homepage.



### **Procedures**

1. Distribute copies of *Picture This: Twenty Questions about the Demographics of Fairfax County*. Have students work in small groups in class or complete it individually as homework.
2. Have students react, discuss, generalize, and write about the impressions they develop as a result of exploring the data.



### **Assessment**

- ◆ Use a “Jeopardy” style game to review the information/answers to the “Twenty Questions” worksheet.



### **Extensions**

- ◆ Use a PowerPoint presentation to overview the demographics of the county.
- ◆ Divide the class into nine groups, assign each group to research and profile a specific district. Have students prepare a mock press release noting interesting demographic characteristics of their district. Add a map component to this activity or combine this lesson with Lesson Plan: *Community Awareness: A Place Called Fairfax*.
- ◆ Have students include an interview of the supervisor elected in the district in which they live, noting his/her responses to the group’s findings.



### **Differentiations**

- ◆ Instead of assigning this project as homework, have students complete the worksheet in pairs. Take care to pair the students carefully, mixing the more technologically savvy with those who do not have a great deal of experience with computer applications.



### **Interdisciplinary Connections**

- ◆ Using current demographic information on the county, ask the math teacher on your team to use graphs, charts, etc. to help students determine how the population is distributed over age groups and income levels. What is the best way to display or share this information? What does the information tell you about life in Fairfax County?
- ◆ In science, students can explore how climate, agriculture, and technology impact the economy in Fairfax County. What does this research indicate would be good job choices for those in Fairfax County? What skills/training would be necessary for such jobs?